

Applicant respectfully submits that the presently pending claims are allowable over the prior art of record, because the prior art, however modified or combined, fails to teach or suggest all of the independent claim limitations. As each of the dependent claims depend from and further limit their respective independent claims, Applicants respectfully submit that for at least the same reason as above all of the pending dependent claims are patentable under 35 U.S.C. § 103.

### CONCLUSION

It is respectfully submitted that, in view of the foregoing remarks, the application is in clear condition for allowance. Issuance of a Notice of Allowance is earnestly solicited.

Attached hereto is a marked-up version of the changes made to the specification and claims by this Response to Office Action. The attached page is captioned "VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE."

The Office is authorized to charge the three-month small entity extension of time fee of \$460.00 to Deposit Account No. 11-0600. Although not believed necessary, the Office is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or § 1.17 or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 11-0600.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at 202-220-4200 to discuss any matter regarding this application.

Respectfully submitted,

KENYON & KENYON

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By: Bradley J. Meier  
Bradley J. Meier  
(Reg. No. 44,236)

KENYON & KENYON  
1500 K Street, N.W., Suite 700  
Washington, D.C. 20005  
(202) 220 - 4200 (telephone)  
(202) 220 - 4201 (facsimile)

**VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE****In the Specification:**

The title has been replaced.

The paragraph at page 1, line 4 of the specification has been added.

**In the Claims:**

Previously pending claims (claims 30-42) have been canceled without prejudice or waiver as to the underlying subject matter.

Please add new claims 43-59 as follows:

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**GROUP 3600**

**43. (New)** A computer-implemented method for automating administrative procedures in an office, comprising:

identifying receipt of an electronic document in a first computer directory representing a virtual office department;

retrieving a status of the electronic document from a database table entry associated with the electronic document; and

transferring the electronic document to a second computer directory representing a different virtual office department based upon the retrieved status.

**44. (New)** The method of claim 43, wherein the virtual office department includes at least one of a mail room, a file room, a printer, and a person's office.

**45. (New)** The method of claim 43, wherein the electronic document includes a transcription, the first computer directory represents a mail room, the status indicates awaiting receipt of the transcription for review, and the second computer directory represents a person's office.

46. (New) The method of claim 43, wherein the electronic document includes an administrative report, the first computer directory represents a file room, the status indicates awaiting receipt of the report for printing, and the second computer directory represents a printer.
47. (New) The method of claim 43, wherein the receipt of the electronic document is identified by monitoring the first computer directory at predetermined intervals for a presence of the electronic document.
48. (New) The method of claim 43, wherein the database table entry is associated with the electronic document via a file-naming convention.
49. (New) The method of claim 43, wherein the electronic document is transferred by a copy command.
50. (New) The method of claim 43, wherein the electronic document is transferred by a move command.
51. (New) An apparatus for automating administrative procedures in an office, comprising:  
a processor; and  
a memory storing instructions adapted to be executed by said processor to:  
    identify receipt of an electronic document in a first computer directory  
    representing a virtual office department;  
    retrieve a status of the electronic document from a database table entry associated  
    with the electronic document; and  
    transfer the electronic document to a second computer directory representing a  
    different virtual office department based upon the retrieved status.
52. (New) The apparatus of claim 51, wherein the virtual office department includes at least one of a mail room, a file room, a printer, and a person's office.

53. (New) The apparatus of claim 51, wherein the electronic document includes a transcription, the first computer directory represents a mail room, the status indicates awaiting receipt of the transcription for review, and the second computer directory represents a person's office.
54. (New) The apparatus of claim 51, wherein the electronic document includes an administrative report, the first computer directory represents a file room, the status indicates awaiting receipt of the report for printing, and the second computer directory represents a printer.
55. (New) The apparatus of claim 51, wherein the receipt of the electronic document is identified by the processor monitoring the first computer directory at predetermined intervals for a presence of the electronic document.
56. (New) The apparatus of claim 51, wherein the database table entry is associated with the electronic document via a file-naming convention.
57. (New) The apparatus of claim 51, wherein the electronic document is transferred by a copy command.
58. (New) The apparatus of claim 51, wherein the electronic document is transferred by a move command.
59. (New) A computer-implemented method, comprising:  
electronically sensing an arrival of an electronic document in a first computer directory representing a virtual office department;  
querying a database for a status of the electronic document;  
updating the status of the electronic document in the database; and  
copying the electronic document to a second computer directory representing a different virtual office department based upon the status of the electronic document.